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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/717,866	11/19/2003	Yoshiyuki Takano	3408.68743	9340
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EXAMINER				
CARTER, CANDICE D				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3629				
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**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

### Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/717,866

**Applicant(s)**

TAKANO ET AL.

**Examiner**

CANDICE D. CARTER

**Art Unit**

3629

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 October 2008.  
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.  
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 and 7-11 is/are pending in the application.  
4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 and 7-11 is/are rejected.  
7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.  
8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 19 November 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB-08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_  
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application  
6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **DETAILED ACTION**

1. This communication is a First Action Non-Final on the merits. Claims 1-3, and 7-11, as filed, are currently pending and have been considered below.

#### ***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

2. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 10/1/2008 has been entered.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. **Claims 1-3, and 7-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.**

Claims 1 and 7 recite the limitation "each action" in lines 11 and 12, respectively. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in these claims.

Claims 1 and 7 recite the limitation "each work" in lines 12 and 13, respectively. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

**6. Claims 1-3 and 7-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Blair et al. (US 2002/0087440) in view of Wagener et al. (5,793,028) and further in view of Biffar (5,903,880).**

As per claim 1, Blair et al. discloses "A transaction voucher management method in a computer relaying a transaction voucher data to be transmitted between business applications through a network, comprising:

a first step in which the computer receives the transaction voucher data transmitted from the business application" (pg 1, ¶13; via The bill of materials information is received in flat file format and comprises part data information, where the bill of materials is included as part of an RFQ and serves as a transaction voucher and where a flat file is a computer readable file that is received by a computer);

"a second step in which, based on both definition data defining in advance a process order of each action performed by transmitting the transaction voucher data for each work defined by a plurality of said actions, and data having recorded information related to the transaction voucher data received in the past, the computer checks a consistency" (pg. 1, ¶ 13; via the flat file is compared to the bill of materials information structure and the part data information is analyzed for inconsistencies where the bill of

materials information structure represents the data defining the process procedure and pg. 6, ¶ 77; via inconsistencies are checked between earlier sent files and later sent files that are sent to the service provider for processing);

"a third step in which, on deciding there is a consistency by the check performed in the second step, the computer records information related to the received transaction voucher data as the log data, and transmits the transaction voucher data to the business application provided on a destination side" (pg. 6, ¶ 73; via the validation process may result in the generation of log files found to be valid or invalid. When flat files are validated they are exported to the service providers systems, where the service provider's system is the business application on the destination side);

"and a fourth step in which, on deciding there is an inconsistency by the check performed in the second step, the computer performs error processing" (pg. 6, ¶ 73; via the log files are reviewed for errors, any detected errors are corrected, and flat file is prepared for re-exportation).

Blair et al. however, fails to disclose "work defined by a plurality of actions performed by transmitting the transaction voucher data including an action corresponding to the received transaction voucher data based on definition data defining in advance the process procedure performed of the work as a sequence of the actions".

Wagener et al. discloses an electronic transaction security system having "work defined by a plurality of actions performed by transmitting the transaction voucher data including an action corresponding to the received transaction voucher data based on

definition data defining in advance the process procedure performed of the work as a sequence of the actions" (Fig. 1 and col. 4, line 60-67 discloses an electronic transaction as a sequential logic process that is triggered automatically, where if the sequence is triggered automatically, the process, inherently, was defined in advance of the process procedure).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the pertinent art at the time the invention was made to modify the method for validating a bill of materials of Blair et al. to include the work defined by a plurality of actions based on definition data defined in advance of the process procedure performed as taught by Wagener et al. in order to ensure that the transaction is valid.

The Blair et al. and Wagener combination fails to explicitly disclose where the transaction data received in the past described in the second step is recorded as "log data".

Biffar discloses a self-contained payment system with circulating digital vouchers having "log data" (col. 6, line 12; via the log contains data describing the history of the transactions).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the pertinent art at the time the invention was made to modify the method for validating a bill of materials of the Blair et al. and Wagener combination to include the log data as disclosed by Biffar since storing the past data of transaction vouchers in a log would help to facilitate the validation process.

The Blair, Wagener, and Biffar combination discloses all of the elements of the claimed invention but fails to explicitly disclose the computer checks a consistency of whether an action performed by the received transaction voucher data is performed conforming to said process order of each action.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the pertinent art at the time the invention was made to modify the method for validating a bill of materials of the Blair Wagener and Biffar combination to include checking a consistency of whether an action performed by the received transaction voucher data is performed conforming to said process order of each action because it is old and well known to employ a computer to ensure that actions are performed with respect to a set of procedural rules.

For example, in the case of an order management system, once an order has been placed, the computer would check to ensure that a customer has been billed, a payment has been received, a customer has been credited for the amount paid, items have been shipped, and items have been delivered.

Claim 7 recite equivalent limitations to claim 1 and are therefore rejected using the same art and rationale as set forth above.

As per claim 2, Blair et al. further discloses "the consistency check performed in the second step comprises:

a step in which the computer determines a preceding transaction voucher data to have been processed prior to the processing of the received transaction voucher data, based on the definition data" (pg. 9, ¶ 95-97; via the system checks inter-record dependency requirements where, for instance, a record type three contains information

pertaining to a particular part in a subject assembly and record type four contains information about the parts used and the relationship between the parts, therefore a record type 4 must have a preceding record type three processed prior to its processing);

“and a step in which the computer checks whether the information related to the determined preceding transaction voucher data is recorded as the log data”(pg 9, ¶ 100; via the valid records log is used as an input to the phase in which the inter-record dependencies are checked).

Claim 8 recite equivalent limitations to claim 2 and are therefore rejected using the same art and rationale as set forth above.

As per claim 3, Blair et al. further discloses “wherein the information recorded as the data in the third step includes information for identifying the work performed based on the received transaction voucher data” (p. 7-8, ¶ 79-89; this section details the record types that describe the work process to be performed by the service provider concerning the BOM or the transaction voucher).

Claim 9 recite equivalent limitations to claim 3 and are therefore rejected using the same art and rationale as set forth above.

As per claim 10, Blair et al. discloses all of the elements of the claimed invention but fails to explicitly disclose “the definition data defines a present action in the sequence based on a preceding action in the sequence”.

Wagener et al. discloses an electronic transaction security system defining a present action in a sequence based on a preceding action in the sequence (col. 13, line



26-62 discloses a sequence of transaction actions that are triggered in response to the completion of a previous action in the sequence, where the present action, inherently, was defined based on its preceding action).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the pertinent art at the time the invention was made to modify the method for validating a bill of materials of Blair et al. to include defining a present action in a sequence based on a preceding action in the sequence as taught by Wagener et al. in order to ensure that the actions are completed in a defined sequence.

Claim 11 recites equivalent limitations to claim 10 and is, therefore, rejected using the same art and rationale as set forth above.

#### ***Response to Arguments***

7. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-3 and 7-9 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

#### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to CANDICE D. CARTER whose telephone number is (571) 270-5105. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Thursday 7:30am- 6:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Weiss can be reached on (571) 272-6812. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/C. D. C./  
Examiner, Art Unit 3629

/John G. Weiss/  
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3629